

# For Families with Children with Hearing Loss

## Agencies with Important Support Services:

### **The Maryland Infants and Toddlers Program** (birth-3yrs)

The Maryland Infants and Toddlers Program provides assessment, therapy, and family support for families with children with hearing loss up through 3 years of age.

### **Hearing Aid Loan Bank**, Paul Farrell, 410-767-0739, Toll Free: 800-535-0182

Provides hearing aids for a 6-month loan period at no cost to families who live in Maryland and have a child with a hearing loss under 3 years of age.

**PARENT SUPPORT GROUPS** Some parents find it helpful to learn in a group setting and share their experiences and unique challenges with other parents whose children are deaf or hard of hearing.

### **The Hearing and Speech Agency**

5900 Metro Drive, Baltimore, MD 21215, 410-318-6780, nberkenbilt@hasa.org, [www.hasa.org](http://www.hasa.org)

Provides a family support group, clinical services, information resource center, advocates for those who are deaf or hard of hearing or who have speech and language disorders. The Hearing and Speech Agency hosts an education and support group for parents of children who are deaf / hard of hearing. The group is open to all.

### **The Parent to Parent Network & Partners for Success**

Cheri Dowling, (410) 480-4597, [Partners@msd.edu](mailto:Partners@msd.edu), [http://www.msd.edu/media/partners/v07i05\\_0606.pdf](http://www.msd.edu/media/partners/v07i05_0606.pdf), [http://www.msd.edu/academics/partners\\_for\\_success/news.htm](http://www.msd.edu/academics/partners_for_success/news.htm)

A resource center for families specializing in children who are deaf and hard of hearing. Provides a lending library of resources (books, videos, etc), newsletters, workshops, and information about community resources. Assists families to resolve concerns and make informed decisions regarding their child's education.

### **Maryland School for the Deaf, Family Education Program**

Mary Ann Swann, Director, 410-480-4545 or 410-480-4540, [swannma@msd.edu](mailto:swannma@msd.edu)

[www.msd.edu](http://www.msd.edu), [http://www.msd.edu/academics/family\\_education/index.html](http://www.msd.edu/academics/family_education/index.html)

Columbia Campus: 8169 Old Montgomery Rd, Ellicott City 21043

Frederick Campus: 101 Clarke Place, PO Box 250, Frederick, MD 21705

Provides home visits, a family support group, sign language instruction, and more for families with children with hearing loss. Services are provided as part of the Maryland Infants and Toddlers Program.

## Websites with Good Introductory Information:

### **Maryland Keys to Communication**

<http://www.mdkeystocommunication.org/>

### **My Baby's Hearing**

*(Introductory information.)*

<http://www.babyhearing.org/nextsteps.asp>

### **Beginnings for Parents of Children Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing, Inc. (Beginnings)**

[www.beginningsvcs.com](http://www.beginningsvcs.com) or [http://www.ncbegin.com/early\\_intervention/early\\_intervention.shtml](http://www.ncbegin.com/early_intervention/early_intervention.shtml)

*(General information on communication options, early intervention, etc.)*

**Listen Up!**

<http://www.listen-up.org/resources.htm>

*(Practical information and extensive list of books and other literature for sale.)*

**Other Good Resources:**

**Choices in Deafness: A Parent's Guide to Communication Options (2nd edition): Schwartz, S. ed.** Woodbine House, Bethesda, MD (1996)

**American Society for Deaf Children**, 800-942-2732, [asdc@deafchildren.org](mailto:asdc@deafchildren.org), [www.deafchildren.org](http://www.deafchildren.org)

**Cochlear Implant Association, Inc.** [www.cici.org](http://www.cici.org) *(provides links to all cochlear implant manufacturers)*

**John Tracy Clinic**, [www.jtc.org](http://www.jtc.org) (free correspondence courses for families and *list of websites by categories of interest*)

**General Principles to Remember:**

Hearing is the primary way we develop the ability to communicate.

Research shows that babies with hearing loss who receive intervention before 6 months of age may have normal or near-normal language and social skills as they grow.

Most parents wish to use their native language in their home: English, Spanish, ASL, etc.

Earlier is better in any modality (spoken language or sign language).

Access is key.

Enable your family to interact with your child.

Embrace the needs of your child.

Facilitate your child's interaction with his or her environment.

Encourage expression of your child's emotional needs and concerns.

Support your child's cognitive thought processes.

Promote inter-family relationships and knowledge of "what's going on".